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Introduction into the history of the textile collection at the Ethnological Museum Berlin

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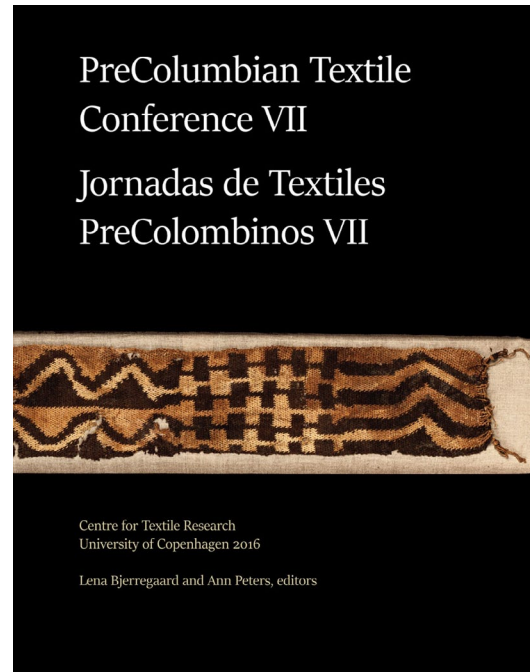
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Introduction into the history of the textile collection at the Ethnological Museum Berlin

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Abstract

When the Ethnological Museum at Berlin was founded, it counted already with several hundred pieces from South America. Only a minor part them belonged to pre-Columbian cultures from the Andes. While most of these pieces were ceramics almost no ancient fabrics could be found in the collection. This reflected the collector's interests focusing on objects made of ceramic, stone or metal and on human remains. Consequently, the first pieces of fabric reached the museum at Berlin as parts of mummy cloths. This did not change until 1879, when the collection of Reiss and Stübel was acquired for the museum. It was the result of the comprehensive saving of all finds from their archaeological excavation activities in Ancón. At the same time, this material has to be considered the foundation of Berlin's famous textile collection.

The paper traces the development of this collection from its early years until the major acquisitions in the early 20th century. It is suggested that the establishment of textile research as an own branch of Andean archaeology was closely linked to this collection.

Keywords: collection history, textiles, Ethnological Museum Berlin, Macedo, Gretzer

Introducción a la historia de la colección textil en el Museo Etnológico de Berlín

Resumen

Cuando se fundó el Museo Etnológico en Berlín, ya contaba con cientos de piezas procedentes de Sudamérica. Solamente una minoría pertenecía a las culturas pre-Columbinas de la región Andina. Mientras la mayoría de estas piezas eran de cerámica, no habían textiles antiguos en la colección. Este reflejaba el interés de los coleccionistas, que se enfocaba en objetos fabricados en cerámica, piedra o metal, y en los restos humanos. Consecuentemente, las primeras piezas textiles llegaban al museo en Berlín como parte de las envolturas de momias. Esto no cambió hasta 1879, cuando se adquirió la colección de Reiss y Stübel para el museo. Era el resultado de la conservación comprensiva de todos los hallazgos de sus actividades de excavación arqueológica en Ancón. A la vez, este material se debe considerar el fundamento de la famosa colección textil de Berlín.

El ensayo traza el desarrollo de esta colección, desde sus primeros años hasta las adquisiciones mayores en el inicio del siglo XX. Se sugiere que el establecimiento de las investigaciones textiles como un campo propio de la arqueología andina ha sido ligado fuertemente a esta colección.

Palabras claves: la historia de colecciones, textiles, Museo Etnológico de Berlín, Macedo, Gretzer

"But the most important [things] for our knowledge about the cultural situation of the indigenous population are the woven textiles, which indicate a high level of development of these Indians." (Wilhelm Reiss 1879: 294).

Ancient textiles from the Central Andes and adjacent coastal regions to the north and south possess an immeasurable relevancy for the research on pre-Columbian cultures of

this area and the reconstruction of their history. Today, the research on pre-Columbian textiles forms its own branch of Andean archaeology. The development of this research field is closely linked to the pre-Columbian collections of the Ethnological Museum Berlin (EMB), the former Royal Museum of Ethnography (Königliches Museum für Völkerkunde Berlin, KMfVB). Their origins date back to the very early years of the museum in late 19th century and are based on some pieces sent to the museum in 1874 and mainly on the

archaeological material that Wilhelm Reiss (1838-1908) and Alphons Stübel (1835-1904) assembled during their excavations at Ancón in 1874/75. Adolf Bastian (1826-1905), the first director of the KMFVB purchased this material in 1879, only some years after the museum's foundation in 1873. The new acquisition raised the number of textiles considerably and turned the museum into one of the most important holders of ancient Peruvian textiles at that time. Until today the museum holds this position, as it still possesses one of the worldwide most important textile collections from the central Andes outside of Peru.

Since the museum continued to purchase archaeological collections from Peru until well into the 20th century, the textile collection grew constantly and became an important research basis. The comparatively easy accessibility of this material at the KMFVB might have been a main reason why the first analytic texts about pre-Columbian fabrics were published out of this museum (Schmidt 1908, 1910, Seler 1916). The fruitful combination of a research basis, scientific expertise, and publication facilities led to the initiation of a new research field: the analysis of pre-Columbian textiles and the use of the results as a source for the reconstruction of the Andean prehistory.

Roots of the collection of Peruvian antiquities at Berlin

When the KMFVB was founded in late December of 1873¹ it started already with a small South-American collection of some 700 ethnographic and archaeological pieces. Formerly these ethnographic objects belonged to the *Royal Prussian Art Chamber at Berlin* (Königlich-Preussische Kunstkammer in Berlin), and were exhibited at the *New Museum* since 1856 (Bolz 2007: 183), while the museum itself was completed and officially opened only in 1859. The *Royal Art Chamber* received the first Peruvian ethnographic and archaeological objects in 1829. Leopold Freiherr von Ledebur (1799-1877), the curator of the *Royal Prussian Art Chamber* acquired them from the *Princess Luise*, a ship of the Prussian Society of Maritime Commerce (Preussische Seehandelsgesellschaft). Until 1850, the South-American collection stayed very small – it comprised for instance only 25 objects from Peru, at least ten of them were pre-Columbian ceramics, and there were no textiles. This small number of pre-Columbian pieces from Peru at Berlin's collection is quite striking, since we know about a lively scene of

antiquities collectors in Peru at the latest from the mid-19th century on (Gänger 2015). Nevertheless the growth of the collection in Berlin did not speed up for more than 20 years. Only in 1872, when Adolf Bastian was already in his third year working as Ledebur's assistant (Bolz 2007: 185) and responsible for the ethnographic collection, two considerably larger collections of Peruvian antiquities were acquired for the *Royal Prussian Art Chamber*. The acquisition became possible thanks to the engagement of the German Consul in Callao/Peru, Theodor von Bunsen (1832-1892). He mediated the selling of the collection² gathered by Otto Antonio Heredia and he encouraged the German Consul in Arica/Tacna (Peru), Carl Eulert, to sell his private collection to the museum in Berlin as well. These two collections are the first ones, which contained several pieces of pre-Columbian textiles, because they included not only a naked mummy from Licerra near Arica (VA 462) but also three dressed mummies: from Carabella (VA 403), Chinchá Alta (VA 404, fig. 1) and Chancay (VA 405). These three mummies belonged to Heredia's collection, while the one from Arica was collected by Eulert. These fabrics are among the first samples of pre-Columbian textiles that reached Berlin and became integrated into the museum's collection. In the same year, two other pieces of pre-Columbian textiles entered the museum: one was a piece of textile from Macabí island and the other one was a *chuspa* or coca-bag from a burial ground near Arica. Both were acquired from the Christy collection at London by exchange – a collecting practice very common among ethnographic museums well into the 20th century (cf. Hoffmann 2010, 2012).

The number of the objects belonging to different material categories, like ceramic, stone or metal, indicate that textiles were not in the focus of collectors but rather an addition to the mummy bundles or finds of human remains. Ceramics made up the largest part of the early Peruvian collection, even though human remains were considered to be the most important part of pre-Columbian archaeological collections at this time. As the inventory of Heredia's and Eulert's collection shows, both start with a mummy. Early publications on Peruvian antiquities also reflect this preference and, for instance, begin their illustrations with human remains (cf. Tschudi and Rivero 1851, Reiss and Stübel 1880-1887).³ Obviously, at this time – the years before the foundation of the ethnological museum at Berlin – , mummies had still a strong aura of exotism and rareness. In the 19th century,

1. The exact date of the Royal order to create an ethnological museum was the 27th December 1873. It took another 13 years to construct a separate building, so actually the Royal Museum of Ethnography Berlin came into life only in December 1886 (Westphal-Hellbusch 1973: 14).

2. Cf. E 771/1872 (SMB-EM, Acta betr. d. Erwerb. Amerika. Vol. 2.).

3. To be exact: Reiss and Stübel give first an impression of Ancón's landscape, but the figures of their archaeological finds start with human remains.



Fig. 1. A female mummy from Chíncha Alta, Peru (VA 404, coll. Heredia). The textiles wrapped around the mummy belong to the earliest, which became integrated into the ethnographic collections of the Royal Prussian Art Chamber in 1872, the founding stock of the current Ethnological Museum in Berlin. Photo: Staatliche Museen zu Berlin – Ethnologisches Museum, Waltraut Schneider-Schütz.

the majority of the mummies stored or shown in European museums or otherwise publicly accessible places, like for instance pharmacies, came from Egypt (cf. eg. Bernschneider-Reif 2007: 201ff). The exotic aura of the mummies could be seen as reminiscent of an object category called *mirabilia* (Laube 2015: 184), which basically shaped the European *Chamber of Curiosities* („Wunderkammer“) and the related production of knowledge.

The great importance attached to mummies becomes also apparent from José Mariano Macedo (1823-1894) correspondence with Bastian, who had asked him for detailed information on the provenience of the quipus of his collection (VA 4319 a-c). Macedo explained, that they have been found attached to a mummy, which was sold to the owner of a store selling ready-made clothes in Lima: „*El manojito de quipus que figura en la colección fue encontrado en una huaca de Ancón formando parte de los adornos de una momia o más bien dicho entre pecho y brazo de la momia. El grupo de quipus fue solo parte de un gran manojito de Quipus que con la momia he habia vendido al dueño de la tienda de ropa hecha[...]*“⁴ Although Macedo went to the shop owner immediately after he had learned about the mummy's delivery, he could not acquire it because it was already reserved for somebody else. From the correspondence it is unclear, if Macedo wanted to acquire the mummy because of its rarity or out of a sense of completeness and contextualization for his quipus. But concerning the largely decontextualized character of his collection, we may consider the exotism as the reason for his desire. Most parts of the pre-Columbian collection in today's Ethnological Museum Berlin are largely de-contextualized. There is only one important exception: the collection of Reiss and Stübel.

Formation of a textile collection at the Königliches Museum für Völkerkunde, Berlin

The two German geographers and “scientific travelers” Reiss and Stübel explored the South American continent between 1868 and 1876. According to Meyer (1905: 64) their travels through the Andes have been the: “*The most profoundly prepared, most fruitful scientific journey of the whole history of American discovery*” (translation by author). Reiss and Stübel arrived in Lima in October 1874. They could not immediately continue their journey to the Amazon as it was planned, because Stübel became sick (Reiss 1921: 148). Therefore, they moved to Ancón some 42 km north of the capital and stayed there several months - until February or even March of 1875.⁵ By then Ancón was small fishing village, which only some years before had been transformed into a sea resort – after the railroad connection to Lima was opened in 1870.⁶

For a long time, Ancón and its surroundings had been known to grave diggers, or robbers, (*huaqueros*) as an

4. Letter from M.J. Macedo to A. Bastian, London, 10th May 1882. (E 453/82, SMB-EM, Acta betr. d. Erwerb. d. Slg. Macedo).

5. Stübel wrote a letter from Ancón in late February 1875 (Hönsch 1994: 34) and Reiss mentioned in a letter, they had left Lima at the 25th of March 1875 (Reiss 1921: 150).

6. <http://ferrocarrilesdelperu.blogspot.de/2013/01/ferrocarril-lima-ancón-chancay-huaral.html> (20th of September 2016).

ancient burial place. According to Bastian (1878: 51), the *huaqueros* exploited the site occasionally, basically in search for precious metal. In the course of the constructions for the railroad, numerous pre-Columbian burials were opened and the place became famous among antiquarians, collectors, travelers and scientists as a mayor archaeological site. So, when Reiss and Stübel went there, it was only a short while after Ancón had become known for its ancient cemetery. After they had visited the site and had seen a burial's rich interior containing household effects and extraordinary clothing (see Hönsch 1994: 34, citing a letter from Stübel to his family), the two scientists decided to use their prolonged stay for an archaeological excavation.

According to Stübel, they based their excavation concept on the aim to collect: "...all things, which could characterize the cultural level (*"Kulturstufe"*) of these indigenous people from South America." (translation by author).⁷ With this methodological approach they did pioneering work in practical archaeology. As Riviale (2000: 342) pointed out, in the era before Reiss and Stübel excavated at Ancón it was not common for archaeological excavations in South America to save all the discovered material of human origin: "... la idea de recolectar la totalidad de objetos presentes en una tumba no debía tomar forma solo a fines del siglo XIX. Entre los primeros, Reiss y Stübel emprendieron la tarea de describir sistemáticamente el material hallado en las tumbas excavadas en Ancon en 1874/75."

In addition to their innovative methodological approach, Reiss and Stübel were also the first scientists who put a strong focus on pre-Columbian textiles and made their existence known to a larger scientific community by publishing their excavation finds between 1880 and 1887 in three large volumes under the title: *"Das Todtenfeld von Ancón"*. Before this publication, only a few other books, as for instance the *"Antigüedades peruanas"* by Johann Jacob von Tschudi and Mariano Eduardo de Rivero (1851) and *"Perou et Bolivie"* by Charles Wiener (1880) depicted textiles in a limited number. These two publications reflect the first steps toward the recognition of textiles as a mayor source of archaeological knowledge, while their scientific value was still quite restricted. The folio by Tschudi and Rivero depicts textiles only on two pages, while Wiener's book reproduces quite a lot of textiles but has severe inaccuracies relating to their provenance, according to Reiss and Stübel (1880-1887: n.p.).

The two scientists recognized not only the beauty of the ancient textiles (Reiss 1879, Stübel 1888), but also their enormous scientific value, and made their awareness public.

So, in July 1879, when Reiss gave a lecture about Ancón's burial traditions at the Anthropological Society of Berlin (Berliner Gesellschaft für Anthropologie, Ethnologie und Urgeschichte, BGAEU) he underlined explicitly the special value of pre-Columbian textiles. Reiss referred to the fabrics as *"most important for the knowledge on the culture of the Indian population"* (1879: 294). Consequently, Reiss and Stübel put a mayor focus on the depiction of fabrics in their magnificent publication of the excavation finds. The entire second volume plus some pages of the first and the third volume of the three folios are dedicated to fabrics: in total more than 235 single pieces were depicted, which was almost half of those recovered (figs. 2-4). The associated texts are very detailed descriptions of the reproduced pieces, comprising information about the material, the manufacturing technique, the designs and colors. They make this the first comprehensive publication on pre-Columbian textiles deriving from a specific archaeological site, in contrast to Wiener's book, which contains only selected examples for the mentioned sites. At the same time, Reiss and Stübel's publication was in general the first large scale publication on a scientific excavation in Peru, which itself was the first in all South America (cf. Haas 1986: 7, Horkheimer 1965: 48, Rowe 1959: 3). For this reason, not only the excavation itself but also the archaeological finds had and still have an enormous scientific value.

Since Reiss and Stübel sought to recover all finds of the excavated graves and since most of the burials were wrapped into numerous pieces of textiles, their collection comprised a large number. In total, the collection sold to Berlin counted 462 textiles, plus 120 bags and 20 grave tablets (fig. 5), which was about a quarter of the whole collection. Furthermore, it comprised 39 false heads made of fabric, 48 pieces of thread, rope and string, several pieces of headgear and feather work and some 33 nets (Haas 1986: 68f). When this collection of about 2000 pieces⁸ was acquired for the KMfVB, it did not only increase the pre-Columbian collection considerably but actually constituted the core of its famous and outstanding textile collection, a status which lasts until now. In connection with the publication of almost half of the textile collection, we might consider the work of Reiss and Stübel as the origin of research on pre-Columbian textiles and as the starting point of its development as a branch of Andean archaeology. During the subsequent years, we see a growing number of scientific works on pre-Columbian textiles. Most of these early papers, manuscripts and later also parts of books based on the textile

7. Letter A. Stübel to his family from Ancón, 26th February 1875 (cf. Hönsch 1994: 34).

8. It is difficult to give an exact number of the pieces: Haas (1986: 69) mentions 2284 pieces, according to the inventory the collection comprises 1.714 numbers and 1.942 single objects.



Fig. 2. Fragment of an *uncu* (Reiss and Stübel, 1880-1887: Vol. 2, Tafel 47).



Fig. 3. Fragments of textiles with different patterns (Reiss and Stübel, 1880-1887: Vol. 2, Tafel 54).



Fig. 4. Different bags (Reiss and Stübel, 1880-1887: Vol. 2, Tafel 73).



Fig. 5. Grave tablets, textile pieces painted with black and red, stretched above a frame made of cane. The tablets were associated with the mummy bundles, either sticking in the cloths or next to it in the ground (Reiss and Stübel, 1880-1887: Vol. 1, Tafel 33a).

collection of the Ethnological Museum Berlin include also material collected by Reiss and Stübel. One of the first publications is a paper by Stübel from 1888 about design development in pre-Columbian textiles. In the same year Max Uhle⁹ (1856-1944) described and analyzed 21 textiles collected by Stübel at Ancón and Arica. In this still unpublished manuscript, Uhle referred several times to the textiles of the Ancón collection at Berlin.

When Adolf Bastian acquired the Reis and Stübel collection for “his” museum at Berlin, he already knew of its scientific relevance and outstanding value. Bastian visited Ancón in July 1875 (Bastian 1878: 50f) – only some months after Reiss and Stübel had finished their excavations there and had left Lima on the 25th of March (Reiss 1921: 150). Bastian received a short impression of the digging activities at the prehistoric burial place. He mentioned in his travel report „*Die Culturländer des Alten America*“ (1878), that *huaqueros* also dug at Ancón and brought their finds to Lima. These peddlers¹⁰ – as Bastian called them (1878: 48) – split the collections and separated the interesting pieces from all the other objects in order to offer them for sale. So because the collection of Reiss and Stübel contained all the finds from the graves, the excavation had a scientific perspective and according to Bastian’s value, was highly important and precious.

Bastian himself stayed in Ancón only one night. Nevertheless he used this stay to rapidly conduct a small excavation at the necropolis (Fischer 2007: 193). But, in contrast to the official purpose of his journey to South America Bastian’s primary concern was not to form thoroughly collections by himself (e.g. by own excavations or by purchase from the market or even from *huaqueros*). Rather, he promoted his idea of an ethnological museum as an „*Universal Archive of Humanity*“ (Fischer et. al. 2007) among prospective stakeholders and supporters, who would defend German interests and for collectors in order to acquire their collections or at least parts of them. While he met with German representatives, entrepreneurs or scientists in search for information about important places to go to or people to meet, he encouraged them at the same time to collect themselves for the KfVB. Bastian also tried to inspire German

consuls to support his activities, by informing him about collections for sale or convincing owners to sell their collections to Berlin.

In relation to the duration of Bastian’s nine-month stay in South America (June 1875/Valparaíso, Chile – March 1876/Barranquilla, Colombia) and the official aim of the journey, its outcome in terms of the quantity of objects brought to Berlin was rather small. The archaeological collection comprised only some 1750-1800 objects.¹¹ Due to his strategy, a considerable part of these objects were collected by at least 23 other collectors, like Johannes Luerksen or Louis Sokolowski (cf. Fischer 2007: 205). Consequently, Bastian’s collection reflects the contemporary preferences of local collectors or antiquarians and demonstrates, that textiles were still not in their focus. Bastian brought only a few textiles to Berlin and as in the earlier collections, some of the fabrics belonged to mummy bundles (e.g. VA 2235, a dressed mummy with a fabric bag from Chiu-Chiu/Chile). Other pieces were wrappings of wooden figurines (e.g. VA 1447 from Ancón, fig. 6). But Bastian’s collection comprised also several *uncus*, *chuspas* and other bags (e.g. VA 2226, VA 2222, VA 2357 and VA 2359), and baskets with weaving supplies (e.g. VA 1784, VA 1787, VA 1795 and VA 1796). In addition about 250 implements for the production of textiles belonged to the collection.

Development of the textile collection

As already mentioned by Eisele (1973: 178f) and Fischer (2007: 205), the main result of Bastian’s journey to South America was the network of collectors for and supporters of the museum that he had established. This network was a major means to guide a substantial stream of ethnographic and archaeological collections to the KfVB during the subsequent years. Some of the collections that he had visited in Peru were later purchased for the Berlin museum, as for instance that of José Mariano Macedo¹² and that of Ana Centeno, bought respectively in 1882 and in 1888 (cf. Gänger 2015: 88). While Centeno’s collection did not contain a significant number of textiles, the Macedo collection had quite a lot of them.

9. Legacy Max Uhle, „Über Gewebe von A. Stübel aus Arica und Ancón.“ (N-0035 w 85, IAI SPK Berlin).

10. Although Bastian used the derogatory word “peddler” one rather has to count with antiquarians, who sold finds from Ancón, since at Lima existed already a well-established antiquity market by this time (cf. Gänger 2015).

11. It is very difficult to give an exact number of the South-American pieces, which Bastian brought to Berlin in 1876. Fischer (2007: 205) mentions 1.748 archaeological objects, but according to the inventory there must have been almost 1.800, plus five ethnographic objects (VA 668, VA 670, VA 672, VA 675, VA 1687). In addition Bastian brought about 1.350 pieces from Meso-America to Berlin.

12. In his published travel report Bastian does not explicitly mention a visit at Macedo’s house, but Macedo himself mentioned the visit in a letter to Bastian. But Macedo got confused with the year, because he indicated 1876 instead of 1875 (J. M. Macedo, letter to A. Bastian, Paris, 21st July 1888, E 453/82, SMB-EM, Acta betr. d. Erwerb. d. Slg. Macedo, SM EMB-SPK). A further proof of Bastian’s direct contact with Macedo are some pieces, which Bastian purchased from him: e.g. VA 684, VA 928, VA 931, VA 932 and VA 934.



Fig. 6. Wooden figurine from Ancón with textile wrappings (VA 1447, coll. Bastian). Photo: Staatliche Museen zu Berlin – Ethnologisches Museum, Ines Seibt.

The origin of Macedo's collection dates back to the late 1850s – probably 1858, after he had received the chair for anatomy at San Marcos University in Lima (Gänger 2015: 115). During the 1870s Macedo's collection was already quite

famous and attracted other collectors but also travellers and scientists. According to Paz Soldán (1945: 17) in 1876 Macedo opened his private house to give a larger public access to the collection. He also made his collection known outside of Peru by presenting pieces in international exhibitions. The Archaeological Museum of Krakow has 18 photographic plates, which show pieces of the Macedo collection (Wołoszyn 1998: 16, Szymańska and Brabaj 1998: 12). The photographic plates supposedly had been presented at the World Exhibition of Paris in 1878 and came to Krakow as part of a collection by the Polish engineer Władysław Kluger (1849-1884).

The mayor part of Macedo's collection, some 1,200 pieces, were ceramics. The collection became especially famous because of the large number of Recuay ceramics, but also because of its *quipus* (VA 4319 a-c). Furthermore, it contained objects made of stone, metal, shell and wood, three mummies (VA 4597 - VA 4599 from Cuzco and Chancay) and several incomplete human remains. Last, but not least, in comparison to other contemporary collections, except the one of Reiss and Stübel, the collection contained a considerable number of textiles, almost 10% of the inventory numbers. In January of 1881, Chilean troops arrived at Lima in the course of the "Pacific War" between Peru, Chile and Bolivia (1879-1884) and caused Macedo to save his collection by taking the largest part of it to Paris.¹³ There it was exhibited for sale, and finally acquired by the KfVB in 1882. Although the total number of textiles comprised only some 250 pieces (mainly VA 4333- VA 4578), it was at that time the second largest number of pre-Columbian textiles, which was acquired for the KfVB – after the Reiss and Stübel collection. As indicated by Macedo's catalogue, all the textiles came from Ancón.¹⁴ Some particularly beautiful pieces indicate that Macedo's selection of textiles is based on a delicate aesthetic taste. The collection comprises several *uncus* and beautiful cloths with figurative designs and embroideries. The collection does not only comprise pre-Columbian pieces, but also some of the colonial era, as for example one *uncu* (VA 4577, fig. 7 a&b). It has a red and a blue side and the yarns were not only made of wool but also of silk. Both aspects are indications for its origin in colonial times (see Hoffmann et.al. 2005: 19).¹⁵ Macedo added to his collection a very detailed list of the objects. This list

13. According to a note in an inventory, Macedo started a new collection out of pieces, which had left behind in Lima in 1881 (cf. E 453/82, Acta betr. d. Erwerbg. d. Slg. Macedo, EMB-SPK).

14. Cf. „Catálogo de la colección de Antigüedades Peruanas del Dr. José M. Macedo“ p. 71f. (E 453/82, Acta betr. d. Erwerbg. d. Slg. Macedo, EMB-SPK).

15. As Lena Bjerregaard comments (personal communication), the embroidery with silk yarn could also have been applied after conquest on an older textile.



Fig. 7a&b. Uncu from the Macedo collection (VA 4577). Photo: Staatliche Museen zu Berlin – Ethnologisches Museum, Claudia Obrocki.

shows that Macedo was very familiar with his collection, since he indicated, for instance, the material used for weaving and distinguished between cotton, hemp, agave, vicuña and alpaca-wool.¹⁶

At the end of the 19th century the museum received one of its largest collections of ancient Peruvian antiquities. It was given to the museum in 1899 by Arthur **Baessler** (1857-1907), thanks to another strategy of Bastian's collecting policies. He had not only instructed local people to pursue his interests but he also used his knowledge to instruct other persons travelling the world to acquire collections for the museum. A major example for this strategy was Baessler, who is until now the most important and generous patron of the museum. The museum owes to him several important collections, all of them received as donations. From his third long-time journey (1895-1898) Baessler brought more than 11,000 pre-Columbian antiquities to Berlin, most of them from Peru. In 1898 Baessler spent some time in Lima, where he met Christian Theodor Wilhelm Gretzer (1847-1926) following a recommendation from the museums staff in Berlin. Gretzer was one of the most important collectors of pre-Columbian antiquities by

that time in Lima and he sold his collection or at least a large part of it to Baessler. Because the collection contained some 2.000 textiles Baessler's donation not only doubled by far the museums' stock of pre-Columbian antiquities in Berlin, it also increased considerably the number of its textiles.

The pinnacle of textile acquisition: the Gretzer collection

Baessler's donation, containing a large number of objects bought from **Gretzer** laid the foundation for the acquisition of one of the largest collections of Peruvian antiquities – if not *THE* largest one – that existed at this time in private possession. It was the second collection from Gretzer, which he created after he had sold the first one - or at least a large part - to Baessler. Gretzer was a German textile merchant from Hannover, who lived in Lima between 1873 and 1903/04 (fig. 7). Soon after he came to Peru and settled himself in Lima he started intense collecting activities. His engagement in gathering collections of natural history and, more important, pre-Columbian antiquities was a passion

16. We don't know Macedo's criteria to determine the fibers and probably not all of his specifications are correct. Especially hemp is very unlikely to have been used, instead it is more probable, that *Furcraea Andina*, a South American agave was used (personal communication Lena Bjerregaard).

for Gretzer but quite probably also a means to get access to the Peruvian high society as an important precondition for the success of his business (cf. Hoffmann, in press). While Bastian does not mention him in his travel report, Gretzer was well-known in Lima as owner of a large collection of Peruvian antiquities at the end of the century. As noted by other travelers to Lima, like Carlos Götting (cf. Haase 2006), and as an announcement preserved on a photo belonging to Gretzer's legacy in the Museum at Hanover suggests, he also acted as merchant of his antiquities or at least offered his collection partially for sale. During his last years in Peru, he not only continued his collecting activities but even intensified them. In a course of only 4 to 5 years, until 1904, when he left Peru to go back to Hanover, he collected more than three times as many pieces of Peruvian antiquities than he had sold to Baessler. This enormous intensification of his collecting activities was quite probable not only due to Gretzer's interest in pre-Columbian cultural history and an aesthetic passion based on his profession. By the end of the 19th century Gretzer had clearly developed a financial interest in collecting pre-Columbian antiquities.

Shortly after his return to Germany, Gretzer offered his collection for sale, first to his hometown, which could not afford it. In 1906 Max Schmidt, the curator for South America in the Museum in Berlin heard about the collection being on sale and became immediately involved in its successful acquisition. Since Gretzer had an interest in reunifying his collection and in keeping it together in one museum, Berlin was in an advantageous position to buy the collection. The transfer was completed in March 1907, and soon after its arrival in Berlin a larger number of pieces was shown at the nearby Museum of Applied Arts. With more than 33,000 pieces, until today this collection is the largest one ever acquired for the present-day Ethnological Museum Berlin.

In contrast to Gretzer's first collection, the second one was not only three times as large but contained also about five times as many textiles, about 10,000. Gretzer's widow described in her memoir (1955) the collecting strategies of her husband. According to her memory he used to hire *huaqueros* for the excavations and told them precisely where to dig. On their return, Gretzer examined the delivered material and selected the pieces he considered to be worth keeping, everything else was thrown away. Gretzer's growing focus on textiles might have had its origin in his profession as a textile merchant but practical considerations in relation to his plans to go back to Germany might have played a role as well. The transatlantic transportation of larger quantities of textiles was much easier to manage than that of objects made of clay, wood, stone or metal. Textiles needed less space and were less subject to destruction by outside forces.



Fig. 8. Huaquero Matiquaena (?) next to a mummy bundle. From the collection Wilhelm Gretzer, Bildarchiv VK (5_1_1125), Landesmuseum Hannover.

The provenances of the textiles from the second Gretzer collection point to a new chapter in early Andean archaeology. While Gretzer's first collection contained mainly pieces from the central coast north of Lima and further north, the second collection contained a major number of textiles from Pachacamac (8.350), some 40 km south of Lima. Through his archaeological excavations in 1896/97 the German archaeologist Max Uhle (1856-1944) made Pachacamac once again to the public as an important pre-Columbian ritual center and an ancient burial place (Uhle 1903). As such it became an important source for the acquisition of pre-Columbian textiles, since the mummy burials were wrapped in several layers of fabric. Furthermore, the second collection reflects also a growing archaeological interest in the Peruvian south coast, which led to the first discoveries of archaeological sites in this region. Gretzer's first collection did not contain any fabric from the south coast, while the second one had 520 textiles from Ica, 25 from Ocucaje, and 34 from Pisco.

Completion of the textile collection

While the acquisition of Gretzer's second collection marked the pinnacle of the development of the Andean prehistoric collection in terms of quantity, a collection of Peruvian antiquities gathered by the director of the American department and curator of the American collection at the museum marked it in a scientific sense. In 1910/11 for the first time a curator from the KMfVB, Eduard Seler (1849 -1922), traveled to South America. Besides other countries, Seler also visited Peru (Seler 1915). Together with his wife Cecilie Seler-Sachs (1855-1935) he collected several hundred pre-Columbian antiquities during his journey. In addition to ceramics and objects made of wood, shell and metal, the collection comprised also about 450 textiles – either complete or fragments as indicated in the catalogue.

Although the museum continued to purchase pre-Columbian fabrics from time to time until well into the 20th century, the acquisition of Seler's and a third, but rather very small collection of Gretzer mark the general conclusion of the development of textile collection at the KMfVB. For the last time, in 1924 Gretzer sold 130 textiles to the museum. It was a selection of very fine and valuable textiles that belonged to Gretzer's private collection, kept until then. As in Lima, for his house in Hannover Gretzer had used his private collection for decoration. But in 1924, due to severe inflation, he felt himself forced to again make money out of his collection by selling it in part. Gretzer even thought about selling all of the Peruvian antiquities he still owned (some 2,000) and offered them also to the museum in Berlin, but without success. After his death in 1926, a year later Erna Gretzer sold the collection to the Niedersächsisches Landesmuseum Hannover, in 1927.

As already mentioned, the pre-Columbian textile collection of the Berlin Ethnological Museum is closely linked to the establishment of archaeological research on textiles as a branch of Andean archaeology. Particularly Max Schmidt, as curator of the South American collection, dedicated his interest to the analysis of pre-Columbian fabrics, using the museum collection as a research basis. Schmidt (1908) showed for instance, that the designs of some Ica textiles depict plaiting patterns of basketry. From these first studies, Schmidt (1910, 1911) went further and analyzed also decors, which showed complex scenes of acting people. Also Seler, who mainly focused on Meso-America but was also interested in the study of Nazca iconography, in 1916 published a paper on a textile from Paracas that the museum had received as a gift from the Peruvian consul Emilio Weiss y Solf in 1915. Schmidt (1916), who by then had already developed a certain expertise in the understanding of textile techniques,

added some remarks on its manufacture. Together with the publications of Reiss and Stübel's folios these early publications mark the first step in systematic research on pre-Columbian textiles.

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